
Sir, We Wish to See Jesus

Rob Rogers September 5, 2021

Introduction

Of everything Jesus could have prayed in His high priestly prayer, He prayed for the unity of the saints. Oneness. Harmony. That we would be at peace with one another.

John 17:11

...Holy Father, keep them in Your name, which You have given Me, that they may be **one**, even as We are **one**.

John 17:20-23

“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be **one**, just as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You have sent Me. ²² The glory that You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be **one** even as we are **one**,²³ I in them and You in Me, that they may become **perfectly one**, so that **the world may know** that You sent Me and loved them even as You loved Me.

Our church family is hurting right now. I know there are many questions. I know there is confusion, and a host of concerns, and rightly so.

- I don't fully understand how we got to where we are.
- And I don't fully understand why I'm sitting in the seat on this bus that I am. But whatever that reason is, here I am. And until Jesus tells me otherwise, here I'll stay.

PERSONAL: Soon after Misty and I married, we lived south of Pittsburgh, PA for a year and got involved in a very small church. Wonderful people...like family. Right before we planted the church in Washington state, our PA church ordained me as a pastor and gave me an opportunity to preach my first sermon. As I walked on to the stage, and turned around to face the congregation, **I saw a scripture engraved on the old wooden podium.** God spoke to me, and He gave me a scripture that would define my life, not only as a Christian, but as a pastor.

The engraving said this... **John 12:21** “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.”

I personally don't have anything of value to give you this morning. I have no accolades, or accomplishments to boast of. No clever or memorable phrases to help you remember the points of a short sermon. I don't have anything to bring to you, other than my Jesus.

And so that's Who I will point us to. In the midst of pain, sorrow, and confusion.

- Because Christ alone is the lifter of our heads.
- Christ alone can mend the broken pieces of a fragmented family.
- Christ alone is the head of the Church.
- And Christ alone is faithful to complete the good work He began in you.

Bronze serpent set on a pole

In the Old Testament, in Numbers 21, as the Israelites moved from Egypt toward the Promised Land, they were attacked by a horde of poisonous snakes. The people of God were lying there suffering in the middle of the wilderness, wounded, poisoned, and dying.

- And as they're lying there hopeless, with no remedy, God speaks...

Numbers 21:8-9

And the Lord said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live.”⁹ So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.

As the Israelites lifted their eyes above their pain, above their hurt, above their suffering, above their circumstances, above their heartache, above their sorrow, above their grief — as they lifted their eyes — they found hope and healing.

John 3:14-15

And as Moses **lifted up** the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be **lifted up**,¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

Matthew Henry, put it perfectly.

“They looked and lived... Whosoever looked, however desperate his case, or feeble his sight, or distant his place, was certainly and perfectly cured. The Lord can relieve us from dangers and distresses, by means which human reason never would have devised. Oh that the venom of the old serpent were as sensibly felt, and the danger as plainly seen, as the Israelites felt pain from the bite of the fiery serpents, and feared the death which followed! Then none would shut their eyes to Christ, or turn from His gospel. Then a crucified Saviour would be so valued, that all things else would be accounted loss for Him; then, without delay, and with earnestness and simplicity, all would apply to him in the appointed way, crying, Lord, save us; we perish! Nor would any abuse the freeness of Christ's salvation, while they reckoned the price which it cost him.”¹

Today

Whatever state you find yourself in today, whatever loss you feel, whatever despair, or angst, or pain, or anger, or sorrow... look to Christ. Cry out to Him. Count all as loss, compared to Him.

As for me and my family, I am going to spend whatever life I have left making as much of Christ as I am able, because without Him I'm nothing. All to Him I owe.

Because Christ alone has the power to rescue, to redeem, to restore... to forgive our sin, to cleanse us of all unrighteousness, to clean us up, to make us new.

Church, Christ is not divided.

His Kingdom is not in trouble.

The Gospel will go forth.

Jesus will build His church and the gates of hell won't prevail against it.

Discussion Questions

1. What was the one thing that Jesus asked the Father for in His high priestly prayer?
2. What is the symbolism of the fiery serpent on the pole in the wilderness, and Christ on the cross?
3. Discuss John 12:21 as a motivating, life-defining scripture.

¹ Henry, Matthew. *Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary on the Bible*

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